

THE  
JOURNAL  
OF THE  
Natural History Society of Siam.

---

---

August 1914.

VOL. I.

No. 2.

---

---

DESCRIPTIONS OF NEW REPTILES  
FROM SIAM.

BY G. A. BOULENGER, LL.D., D.SC., PH.D., F.R.S.

WITH NOTES.

BY MALCOLM SMITH, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

---

I am indebted to Dr. Malcolm Smith for examples of the following species of Reptiles which he suspected to be new to Science, and which he has requested me to describe.

LYGOSOMA ANGUINOIDES.\*

Section *Lygosoma*. Limbless. Snout short, rounded, projecting feebly beyond the mouth. Nostril pierced in the anterior part of a large nasal, which is narrowly separated from its fellow: rostral produced between the nasals: frontonasal nearly twice as broad as long, forming a narrow suture with the rostral, and a broad one with the frontal: praefrontals very small and widely separated: frontal as long as broad, in contact with the first (largest) supraciliary and with the first supraocular: three supraoculars, first largest: five supraciliaries: frontoparietals distinct, about as large as the interparietal: parietals narrow, forming a suture behind the interparietal, followed by a pair of nuchals: six upper labials, first largest: symphyisial very

---

\* [The illustration of this new lizard is not yet completed and will appear in the next number of the Journal. Eds.]

large: ear completely hidden. 22 smooth scales round the middle of the body, dorsals a little larger than laterals and ventrals. A pair of enlarged praeanales. Tail thick. Pale greyish brown, with a pair of dark brown streaks along the middle of the back and a broader dorso-lateral pair; below the latter and on the belly, brown lines run between the series of scales.

Total length 95 mm.: tail (reproduced) 35 mm.

The single specimen described was found beneath a log at Bangtaphan.

This species is very closely related to the Australian *L. ophioscincus*, Blgr. (*Ophioscincus australis*, Peters), which differs in the rostral forming a broader suture with the frontonasal and in the broader frontal and parietals.

#### SIMOTES INORNATUS.

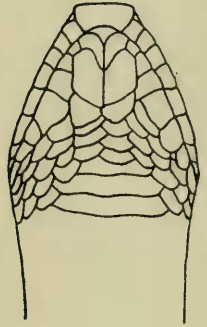
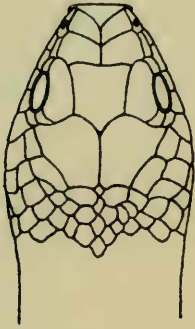
Nasal divided; portion of rostral seen from above, as long as its distance from the frontal; suture between the internasals longer than that between the praefrontals; frontal as long as its distance from the end of the snout, as long as the parietals; loreal a little longer than deep; one praeocular and two postoculars; no suboculars; temporals 1+2; eight upper labials, fourth and fifth entering the eye; four lower labials in contact with the anterior chin-shields, which are nearly twice as long as the posterior. Scales in 15 rows. Ventrals 171; and entire; subcaudals 42. Uniform pale brown above, yellowish white beneath.

Total length 580 mm.; tail 90 mm.

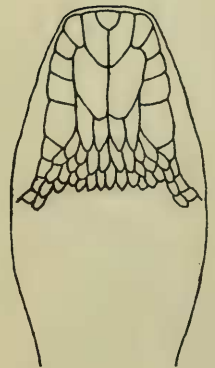
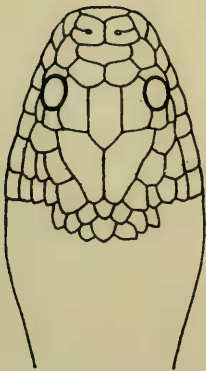
A single male specimen from Nong Kai Ploi, E. of Sriracha.

The number of rows of scales easily distinguishes this species from *S. violaceus*, Cantor, to which it is most nearly related.

[This snake was collected and kindly forwarded to me by Mr. P. A. R. Barron, of the Borneo Company, to whom I am also indebted for a second specimen, which differs from the type description in the following particulars. Portion of rostral seen from above, shorter than its distance from the frontal: suture between the internasals equal to to suture between the praefrontals. Loreal as long as deep. Ventrals 175. Subcaudals 40. Color. Above, dull, salmon-red (much brighter, I am informed, in life) and with very faintly marked dark greyish narrow cross-bars. Below, with indistinct, small, squarish spots, placed laterally, in the posterior half of the body and tail. This specimen has been in my possession for some months, and the handsome red coloring has gradually faded until now it is nearly of the brown hue described



*SIMOTES INORNATUS. X2.*



*HYPsirrhina SMITHII. NAT. SIZE.*



by Mr. Boulenger. Mr. Barron who saw both specimens when fresh informs me, however, that the first one never showed any red coloration. The drawing of the head, by Mr. C. L. Groundwater, is from the second specimen, which will be also presented to the British Museum.—M. S. ]

HYPHIRHINA SMITHII.

Rostral twice as broad as deep; internasal single, a little more than twice as broad as long; frontal scarcely broader than the supraocular, twice as long as broad, as long as its distance from the end of the snout, a little shorter than the parietals; loreal as long as deep, in contact with the internasal; one preocular, the lower part, on one side, separated off as a subocular, two postoculars; temporals 1+2-3; eight upper labials, fourth entering the eye; five lower labials in contact with the anterior chin-shields; posterior chin-shields hardly distinguishable from the surrounding scales. Scales in 21 rows. Ventrals 121; anal divided; subcaudals 56. Head and anterior part of the body grey above, with a zigzag vertebral band formed of confluent large black spots, and black on the sides and beneath, the black being interrupted by light pinkish bars which are continued as irregular series of yellow spots across the belly; posterior part of body iridescent black, with incomplete narrow annuli, which are pinkish above and yellow beneath; upper surface of head spotted with black, with a black U-shaped mark from the angle of the mouth to the parietal. Tongue whitish (in life).

Total length 400 mm.; tail 80 mm.

A single female specimen from the river Menam at Bangkok.

This species, named after Dr. Malcolm Smith, is very closely allied to *H. jayorii*, Peters, from which it differs in the narrower frontal shield and, very strikingly, in the coloration.

[This snake was caught by a small boy whilst shrimping off Messrs. L. T. Leonowens, Ltd., and kindly sent me by Mr. Miller. I kept it alive for four months. It had the sluggish disposition that is found in so many of the fresh-water snakes, and never made any attempt to bite when handled. It was not strictly aquatic, and lived quite as much on the land as in the water. On one occasion it ate a fish, but afterwards refused all food.—M.S.]

Dr. Malcolm Smith has pointed out to me that two distinct forms have been confounded by Günther and by myself under the name of *Simotes taeniatus*. One, with 17 rows of scales and a blackish spot

at the base of the tail and another at the end, has been figured by Günther (Rept. Brit. Ind., pl. XX. fig. A). The other, with 19 rows of scales and without the spots on the tail has been described and figured by Jan as *S. quadrilineatus*. Unfortunately, the latter name is a strict synonym of *S. taeniatus*, Günther's original description (P. Z. S. 1861, p. 189) having been drawn up from a single specimen of the same form; so that I am compelled to propose a new name, *var. Mouhoti*, for the snake figured in the Reptiles of British India. I should have regarded these two forms as species, as Dr. Malcolm Smith, who has examined many specimens, finds them always quite distinct from each other, but for the fact that a specimen from Laos in the British Museum combines the number of scales of *S. taeniatus* with the coloration of *S. Mouhoti*. Dr. Malcolm Smith further points out a difference in the colour of the tongue, which is entirely reddish in the former, and black at the base and at the tips in the latter.

[I have now examined altogether some 40 specimens of these two forms from various parts of the country, and the fact that I had so far always found them distinct from each other, led me to think that they should be ranked as species. Both are equally common in Bangkok, but the form with 19 rows of scales is rare outside. The following are the various points of difference, drawn up from notes of my own specimens.

<i>S. taeniatus.</i>	<i>S. Mouhoti.</i>
(Drawn up from 15 specimens.)	(Drawn up from 25 specimens.)
19 rows of scales.	17 rows of scales.
Tongue red.	Tongue black at the base and tips.
Posterior head-mark arrow shaped.	Posterior head-mark heart shaped.
No tail-bars or collar.	1 or 2 tail-bars and a more or less complete collar. (Any or all occasionally absent).
Subocular rarely present.	Subocular generally present.
Ventrals 155—167.	Ventrals 144—163.
Temporals 2+2, rarely 1+2.	Temporals 1+2, rarely 2+2.

I should be grateful to any member of the Society who will forward me further specimens for examination. A description of the two forms will be found in the article on the Snakes of Bangkok, in this number.—M. S.]



## THE BIRDS OF BANGKOK.

---

By W. J. F. WILLIAMSON.

### INTRODUCTION.

In the last number of the *Journal*, I published a Preliminary List of the Birds of Bangkok, and stated that, with the present number, I hoped to commence a serial paper giving some account of the appearance, habits, etc., of the birds of this locality.

Comparatively little has been done, up to the present, in the way of a systematic study of the birds of Siam. A few local collections have been made and some papers issued, the earliest, of which I have any record, being Capt. Stanley S. Flower's *Birds of a Bangkok Garden*, published in *The Ibis* in the late nineties of the last century. This includes 28 birds only, and is of very slight value. The same may be said of the list of Siamese birds, numbering 75 species (some of them unidentified), given in an appendix to Mr. H. Warington Smyth's *Five Years in Siam*, published in 1898. The only part of the country which has been worked with any degree of thoroughness is the western portion of Siamese Malaya, from Trang southward. In 1908 and 1909, this district was visited by Messrs. Robinson and Kloss, of the Federated Malay States Museums, who published in *The Ibis*, in 1910-11, a paper giving a complete list of all the birds obtained or observed by them or their collectors.\* The paper in question, which enumerates some 270 species, is the most important contribution yet made to our knowledge of Siamese avifauna. It is to be remarked, however, that the area covered by these contributors includes, not only Trang, but also the adjacent Langkawi group of Islands, together with Perlis and the northern portion of the State of Kedah as far south as the mouth of the Kedah river. These places were all Siamese territory at the time they were visited, but, before the paper was issued, a large part of the area mentioned had passed under British protection by

---

\*As stated by Messrs. Robinson and Kloss, Trang had been previously visited in 1896, 1897 and 1899, by Dr. W. L. Abbott, the well-known American naturalist, who formed a magnificent collection of bird-skins. Unfortunately, however, no full account of this has ever been issued, though a few species have been described.

virtue of the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909. As localities are not always stated by Messrs. Robinson and Kloss, it is possible that some of the birds given in this paper were not found in what is now Siamese territory.

Next in chronological order is Mr. K. G. Gairdner's *List of the Commoner Birds found in Siam*, which was published in 1912 in the *Journal of the Siam Society*, and comprises some 140 species, for the most part personally obtained or observed by Mr. Gairdner in different parts of the country, including 26 in Bangkok. An interesting feature of the list is the attempt which has been made to give the Siamese names of a number of the birds mentioned.

Finally, we have the paper published in 1913 by Count Nils Gyldenstolpe, the Swedish naturalist who spent nearly six months in Siam between November 1911 and May 1912. This contains a list of 191 birds collected or observed in various localities ranging from Sriracha and Koh-si-chang in the south, to about as far as Dene-chai in the north. It is a notable addition to the published lists of our avifauna.

The descriptions in this paper will be as full as is considered necessary to enable the various species to be readily identified, but no attempt will be made to render them technically complete. Further, in order to avoid undue detail, one measurement only will usually be given, viz., the total length of the bird, but collectors are recommended to take and record the following measurements:—

*Length.* From tip of bill to tip of longest tail feather, with the bird laid flat.

*Tail.* From root of tail to tip of longest tail feather.

*Wing.* From bend of wing to tip of longest primary.

*Tarsus.* From centre of joint connecting tarsus with tibia, to basal joint of middle toe.

*Bill.* From tip of bill to angle of gape.

No remarks will be made on the nesting habits of the species dealt with. The reason for this omission is two-fold. In the first place, any notes on the subject, however slight, would unduly increase the length of this paper, and so retard its completion. Secondly, one of the members of the Society is making a special study of the nests and eggs of Siamese birds, and it is hoped that he may be in a position before very long to give us the benefit of his observations on this most



interesting feature of bird-life. It has, accordingly, been deemed advisable, at this juncture, to refrain from dealing with the subject in what would necessarily (owing to lack of adequate material) have been an incomplete manner.

As was the case with the Preliminary List published in the last number of the *Journal*, the classification and nomenclature of the birds here described are taken from the *Fauna of British India—Birds*, by Oates and Blanford, and the numbers in brackets are those of that work. Species described in this paper, which were not included in the Preliminary List, are marked with an asterisk. (\*)

The area within which the birds dealt with have been obtained, is that comprised by the City and its suburbs, together with the surrounding country within easy walking distance thereof. This limitation of area has been adopted with a view to rendering the paper of particular use to those residents of the Capital (and they are doubtless many) whose opportunities for observation are confined to Bangkok and its immediate neighbourhood.

The following is a list of the principal books and papers to which references will be made, but the names of the authors only will be quoted, in order to avoid repetition of the titles of the works:—

- Blanford..... W. T. Blanford. The Fauna of British India—Birds. Vols. III and IV. 1895 and 1898.
- Gyldenstolpe..... Count Nils Gyldenstolpe. Swedish Zoological Expedition to Siam. 1913.
- Oates..... Eugene W. Oates. The Fauna of British India—Birds. Vols. I and II. 1889 and 1890.
- Robinson..... Herbert C. Robinson. A Hand-List of the Birds of the Malay Peninsula, south of the Isthmus of Kra. 1910.
- Robinson and Kloss... Herbert C. Robinson and C. B. Kloss. On Birds from the Northern Portion of the Malay Peninsula, including the Islands of Langkawi and Terutau. *The Ibis*. 1910-11.

It may be appropriate to make a few remarks here on the subject of the Siamese names for birds. In Siamese, the word for Bird is นก (*Nok*), and this is usually prefixed to the particular species to be described—thus, นก ตีทอง (*Nok tī t'hong*, literally, the Goldbeater-bird, *i.e.*, the Coppersmith or Barbet), in much the same way as we say Weaver-bird or Tailor-bird. In English, however, these descriptive names are the exception, whereas in Siamese they are the rule—only a very few birds not having the syllable *Nok* prefixed to their names, such as กา (*Kā*, Crow), แร้ง (*Rēng*, Vulture), etc. Domestic poultry, again, and other allied species, have special names of their own, as ไก่ (*Kai*, Fowl), with its derivatives ไก่ กระจ่าง (*Kai-nguang*, Turkey), ไก่ฟ้า (*Kai-fa*, Pheasant), ไก่ป่า (*Kai-pā*, Jungle Fowl), ไก่นา (*Kai-nā*, literally, Field Chicken, a name properly applicable to the large Grey Quail); เป็ด (*Ped*,\* Duck), with its derivatives เป็ดน้ำ (*Ped-nām*, Teal), etc.; ห่าน (*Hān*, Goose); and หงส์ (*Hongs*,† Swan).

The term นก กระจับ (*Nok krachib*) is a general one applied to small birds of more or less inconspicuous plumage, and is also used, with descriptive affixes, to denote particular species—thus นก กระจับ กระไซ (*Nok krachib krasai*), *i.e.*, the common Tailor-bird. It has also to be remarked that, colloquially, the prefix อี (*I*),‡ denoting a female of low rank, is often applied to a number of birds, *e. g.*, อีกา (*I-kā*, Crow); อีแร้ง (*I-rēng*, Vulture); นก อีแอ่น (*Nok i-ēn*, Swallow), &c. It is, however, usually omitted both in polite conversation and in writing.

Needless to say, Siamese names vary according to locality, as do popular names in most countries, and even in the same locality different names will often be given to the same bird—probably owing to want of exact knowledge of the bird itself. I have endeavoured to

\*The *d* of *Ped* is pronounced more like a *t*.

†The *s* of *Hongs* is silent.

‡To be pronounced like the English vowel *E*.